

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding grounds of rejection is respectfully requested in light of the above proposed amendments and the remarks that follow.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2 and 5-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Obrochta in view of admitted prior art and further in view of either Willet et al. (EP 1022434A2) or Lee (U.S. Patent No. 6,234,753).

Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of dependent claim 5 and independent claim 7 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 8 (claims 5 and 8 have been canceled), and additional language have been added to each.

Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 now requires not only a pair of pegs projecting in axially opposite directions from opposite sides of the solid curved upper body portion above the elongated slot and spaced from an upper edge of the solid curved upper body portion, but also requires that in a radial direction, the pegs are closer to an elongated slot than to the upper edge of the solid curved upper body portion. No new matter has been added. The specification has been amended to provide precise antecedent basis for language added to the claim, but that language is clearly supported in the drawings as filed.

The primary reference to Obrochta discloses a cambered ceramic core comprising a generally uniformly shaped, angled body with a relatively shallow slot 37 at one end thereof. Note that the portions of the ceramic core on either side of the "slot 37" are not coplanar. In addition, the support pins 28, 30, 32, 34 and 36 project from one side of the core, all extending in the same direction. Under no reasonable interpretation, can the support pins of Obrochta be considered as projecting in axially opposite directions from opposite sides of the solid curved upper body portion of the core, with the pegs closer to the elongated slot than to the upper edge

of the curved upper body portion. In addition, neither the acknowledged prior art nor the patent to Lee disclose or suggest the location of any core support pins or pegs.

As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of references as applied by the Examiner does not render obvious the subject matter of amended claim 1.

The subject matter of dependent claims 2 and 6 is also nowhere disclosed in the applied prior art.

With respect to independent claim 7, that claim has also been amended to require a pair of pegs projecting in axially opposite directions from opposite sides of the solid curved upper body portion in a manner similar to claim 1. In addition, independent claim 7 now incorporates the subject matter of dependent claim 8, thus requiring the solid curved upper body portion to have opposite concave and convex surfaces, with the pegs extending from the convex surface of the solid curved upper body portion. As already indicated above, none of the prior art references, alone or in combination, suggest the configuration of pegs as now required by amended claim 7. Accordingly, independent claim 7 as well as dependent claim 9 also patentably define over the applied prior art.

It is respectfully submitted that the application, including remaining claims 1, 2, 6, 7 and 9, is in condition for immediate allowance and early passage to issue is requested. In the event,

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however, any small matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned so that the prosecution of this application can be expeditiously concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael J. Keenan", written over a horizontal line.

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